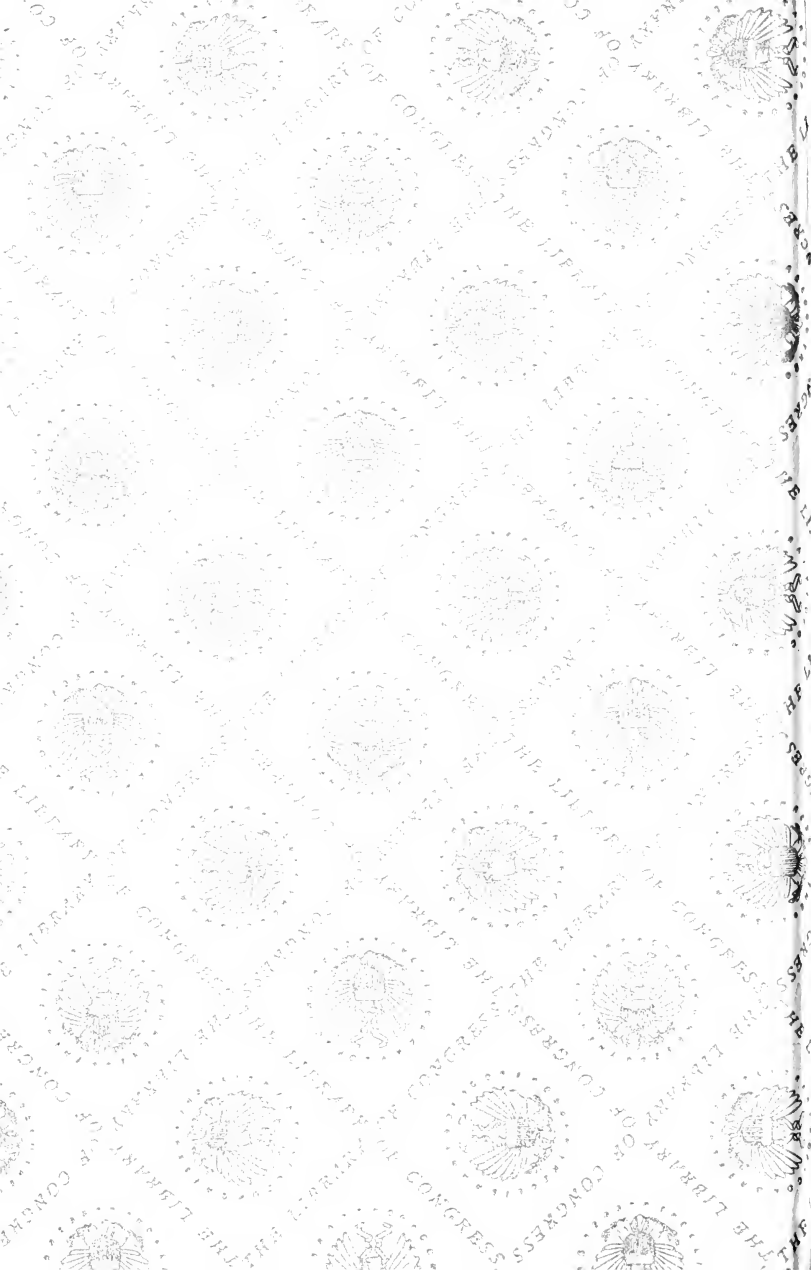
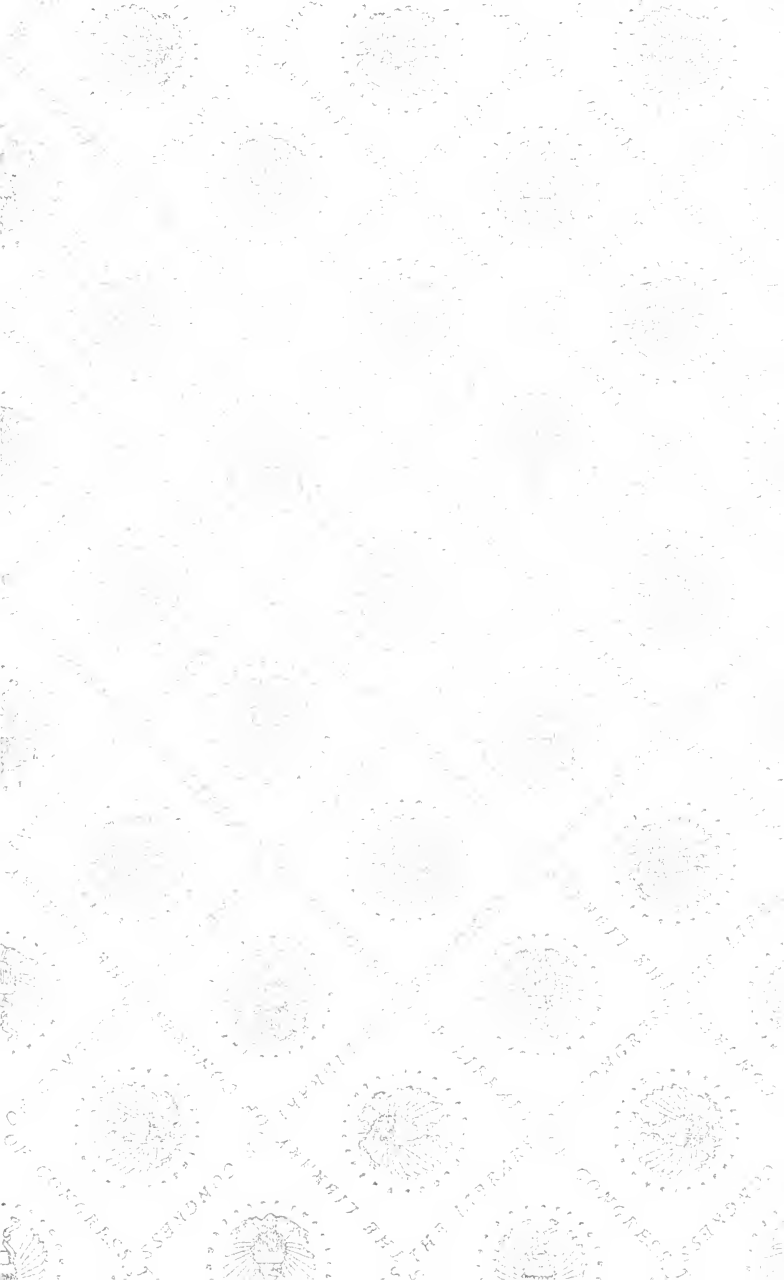


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LEE, An Epic





LEE

AN EPIC

BY
FLORA ELLICE STEVENS



KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI
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To the memory of my father who loved
him, of my uncles who followed him, I dedicate
this poem—Lee.



NOTE

I have endeavored to give a poetical conception, not a strictly historical portrait of the great Confederate leader, and only regret that my talent has not been sufficient to fitly portray so magnificent a character.



PROLOGUE.

Sing thine own age, there's passion, pathos, pain,
Brave Tragedy, sweet Comedy, as in Percy's age,
Or Harry Tudor's.

PROEM.

Ay, this was Robert Lee, and son of Harry,
Nephew of that Richard, who did sign
The charter of our freedom, and nigh
Of kin to Fitzhugh and to Fairfax;
Yea, of goodly lineage from over sea;
And yet he had a prouder name withal
Than all these gentle titles;
Lover, he, and husband of the Rose of Arlington,
Sweetest Mary Custis—White Rose of Arlington.

Fourteen

Who sink
The glories of the past in the duties
Of the present.

Sweet descendant
Of that renowned dame, who stately graced
Mount Vernon's wide historic halls, and blew
About the wilderness the airs of courts;
Mistress of green fields and acres fair.

Then all the larks of Alexandria
Did carol "Mary" to mine ears, and all
The swallows down the long Potomac slope,
Going or coming, trebled "Mary" back!
The conscious river and the constant tide
Rippled "Mary" to the blue flag and the briar.
The slender poplar as a tall fair maid
In gown green-glittering slowly swayed
With the breeze in the broom and the iris-bloom;
When the wild lily blows upon the mere,
And the wild hawk doth wheel upon the stream.

Spring when the sea gave up flowers, the glad land
pearls.

In a little lillied inlet
With columbine inlay,
Southward gazed we, where did adventurous spirits
rest,
Upon a flowery couch, in regions fresh
And far, once in the Genovese' new world.
Rapt with the budding languors of the spring.
Saw the perfect South, that tri-sided
Crysolite, whose vortex is a flowering cape,
One sole and glistening point extreme.

Where sweet and wet
Pagodas lifts the mignonette,
Roses unrolled
A second and more splendid
Field of Cloth of Gold.
Saw the perfect world, dwelt in that golden hour
Of the spell upon the land, the enchantment
On the sea. The impulse of the wayward deep
Entered our hearts, and moved them as the wave.
Thro' blue mirage and silver mist did see
Baseless towers built by airy powers
Of hoary masonry in faery realms remote.

The hidden soul unto the world is fair
Tho' it but seem to live, and love and die.

A maid half-spring, half-summer, she,
Pausing where the spring and summer meet,
The moment when the bud betrays the rose.
Mary in her flowered gown the Maiden of the
Manse.

The setting sun is blown along the sky
A red-gold moon,
One rose pomegranate
Burns the Afternoon—

Last saw Arlington
All glory to the height—together passed
Into that purple world!
I fain would dwell upon a height, and look
From glory unto glory. Earliest see
The Dawn groping for her torch.

Hear the Morn's
Magnificat. The amber ladder lift by seraphim,
Who quest some antique patriarch to stay;

The apocalypse of purpling cloud,
The sacrament of mist. Until the lanes
Grow holy. I see the rose-tinted dawn
Of Hope, and Mem'ry's evening skies.
Filled with the old immemorial desire,
The height to gain, the craft to know, to let
Each stand for something—To be with the poet
Seeking th' fit elusive word, with the press
Feeling the pulse of the world. The fisherman
Sees but the nets and the boats, not the long glory
Round the cape. In the hills' height
I shall find God's depth—In their magnificence,
His significance. Hear the I Am
In all its awful Hebrew. Hear the Voice
In the silences. See the lily
On the lake Avernus. And have
A little holding of that larger life
That is not any where upon the earth,
Save in the primeval Eden,
And the vision of the seer.

Thou Arlington,
A dwelling art upon a height. There we
Did pass the calm long idyl of our wedded days.
Once in the star-time of the hours, ere yet
The sky was rich with jasper planets, long
Did I pace, while all my being seemed
All lonely as a solitary star, that hangs
O'er a gray water and an untrod land.
When ere did Night's first tardy gem arise,
Sudden an orange globe, puffed by each light
breeze,
Slowly revolved, outshone Leander's lantern,
And all the narrowed space broadened with light
Of eastern suns. The gray hills shepherding

The lonely vales. Oft, when 'tween sheets of crystal
Slept the stream, the fields neath a smooth cover
—No richer hath the prince—with moonlight sil-
vered

Was the chilling world. Rose goodly Arlington
Like a magic palace on enchanted hills.

Within we sate by deep-mouth'd caves of cheer,
Whence fires swirled, and on the ceiling fixed
Crimson characters Confuscan. Set

Argent doors and gold, vermeil hangings swung,
With silver cloth and pearl the halls did strew,
The walls with fire-light full blazoned were,
Well-glistening were the floors. That orgy
Of red warmth the hearth. Man's pillar

In his perilous days,

My pillar and my green forest tree.

That rose-red tower raised for Eve forlorn—

And she anear, Mary, Angel of the Hearth.

The secret of the summer hills

Within her ear hath lain,

The music of the whispering winds

Across her lips hath passed.

Oft have I seen her wend among her slaves,

Bearing a healing potion to the sick,

When downy snow-flakes thick, wind-driven,

Set their white lattice down 'tween earth and
heaven;

When greyed-eyed March, a solitary lily

'Gainst her sleeve, came thro' the windy oaks,

O'er the dark field and low wet weed. While far

The dull seas spake in sovran tone;

When the fair pea purpled in her paly hood,

Or when the hillside flower lifts

A second summer to the summer sweet;

Eighteen

Or when the reapers wound among the sheaves,
In the glowing garden land.
Ay, the dark children by the way do pluck
Her gown, she hath a gift for each. Th' aged
Bless Mary Custis—the bereaved—the poor?
There are no poor at Mary Custis' door.
The pilgrim thence is singing sent,
With o'erfilled palm the mendicant.
'Tis she hath summered all the wintry height
And calmed the unkind deep. Ay, her love
Hath made of me, a plain soldier, a prince
'Mong men. Together we watched Vega's azure-
circled point
Some clear night distinct.
Time's empurpled battlements together climbed
On pages of a book. Stirred at the same tale,
Wept o'er the same woe, thrilled at the same peril.
A lonely eve, and rainy shore saw,
Those gentle lovers doomed, Paul and fair Virginia.
Or, where the cloud-enisled pale moon hath found
All her spent silver on the distant ground.
The fated lord, of some low sea-isle loomed,
That melts thro' thick mist into rain.

—The dark

Corsican, who dreamed in empires,
Who late hath passed, nor plainer shewed than did
Charlemagne's armed hauteur and imperial frame.
The hollow heart of all the hollow world
But lightly touched, and pressed to happier themes.
Nor ever felt ourselves ill-omened, but
Beheld but others' ruin staring from the page.
Never the dream of doom on mine own house,
Not ours the sailless barque upon the foam,
Never our hands beating the swift cloud,

Never our cry with wild low-flying things.
Thro' roaring tumult round the glorying deep.
Never the bright sword bar athwart our gate,
The exiles sparce loaf, and the water jar.
Never to hear sad tales save in a verse,
Never to know save in a seaman's book
The castaway, who sees 'neath the thin moon,
The mist upon the mainland, the sea-line,
In a wild land by a wild sea doth stride,
An ancient isle that lies all desolate;
Who sees like sheeted shapes, sole touch of life,
The nine white water-birds upon the bar;
His faithless oar hard by his faithful boat,
Who knows where lies the north, the west, the east,
But never mad conjecture may conceive
If savage lands or peopled lie beyond,
Or ocean roaring into further ocean lead.

She a dreamy child went wandering
In a moon-white world of silver silences;
Silence unbroken by any quiring bird,
Vibrating his lavish rapture undeterred,
Unbroken by wind, or fin, or boisterous herd,
Noiseless the cedarn, fig, the porphyry grot,
As a walled Aztec town was all the spot;
Supine Youth's priest-hood, none might desecrate
The Temple of the Hour, touch on Fate.
The boy might turn and yearn, the hyacinth girl,
Pressing an agate bowl, dipt o'er with many a curl,
Come the Dorian way, no nightingale would err
Thro' the green canal to sweep her silvery gondola
Till ripples of sorrow to be stir before;
But life, like an alabaster island,
Did crown an aurelian sea.

Twenty

Imperial Youth, when the Day was fine gold
And the Night was pure silver. When one drank in
Color, and beauty was his very breath.
When there was the exquisite thing to do,
The exquisite thing to say. When there was
The sweetness of desire, the loveliness of resolve;
When we saw the flame in the line,
The sparkle in the word tourmaline.
When one sole bird took all heaven for his song,
And all that red rose was one wound
Whence bruised Summer poured her sweetest loss.
When ceaselessly the fountain did untwine
Her endless jewelled braid;
When the lilacs clustered yet lovelier pearls,
Than the sea-thieves ere hid in a shell.

Could the years come back, ah! they would
not know
The youth, they left in the Long Ago.
No record careful Time hath filed,
So plain doth shew, as the growth of a child.

Shaded by four great pampas plumes all silky,
Set in a costly vase full milky,
Oft hath she sate within a bower enrailed
With eglantine, and many a bud o'ertrailed;
By the thrush-tenanted elms, and bent
O'er some webbed 'broidery, that did mystic shew
As an Arabic script in gold doth run,
On some precious porphyry stone. And spake,
Whose voice was like half-forgotten songs
To Mem'ry linked by an old refrain.

Ay, I have looked from forth the columned
porch,

When the dark wave comes thundering up the coast,
And seen the storm advance. Heard the far-off
flail

Of the wind. Seen the fall of the long brown rain,
On deeps of fern and of clear white stone.

The far low houses all, gleam in their fresh veneer.

The simple cot, the single tree,

The grey fields stretching far and wide.

The sky grew sharply black and white, anear

The lightning stretched its fiery rod. Anon

A little light made half the sky all sickly

With a flame of palest green. The late past sun

Returned apace, and set in sudden red.

—As when the fray incarnadines the stream—

Broad-belted was the Occident sky,

There warring gods and giants venerable.

As the awed traveller in the desert sees

The face of the silent queen, that is half

As old as the world. And all the Day

Rolled swiftly to the sad, gray, dim, far west.

As he who slowly goes towards one wan light,

At mid-night in a space of weeds, I passed;

When lo!

The moon amidst confederate clouds rose

Gloriously full! The moon-light raised in alabaster

On the sands some tilting Pisian tower.

I saw the drifts unsullied of daisies,

Sweeps of asphodel opening on the wood,

And Echo called her answering twin from out

A silver cell.

She hath entered

Into the moonlight, her spirit hath become

A part of the shelter and the calm.

Twenty-Two

If I had my modest ambition 'twere, that I,
A plain Virginia youth, of no
Considerable fortune, might achieve
The name of Robert Lee, the gentle soldier;
Yea, I have thirsted to do heroes' deeds;
And vowed that I full fain would keep the name
Of Lee unspoiled, the dower a Custis gave,
Keep this Robert Lee, thro' shock or craft,
Or doubt, temptation's guilded guise,
All blameless to the end.

Mary of Arlington, daughter of Custis,
Wife now of Robert Lee. Now I see her
Mid her daughters four, seeming but elder sister
To these maids, the stately rose 'mong rose-buds;
Watch a younger, but no fairer Mary Custis.
I, clothed in my country's cloth, have sate 'mid
relics

Of our country's Sire, he dwarfing those dim
Giants of the east, and heard her sire
Commend him to his deserts. Or have slipped
Among my boys, bearing the honored names
Of Custis and of Fitzhugh, hanging breathless
On their grand-sire's tales of his great foster-sire,
Of Washington, till they, too, dreamed themselves
Charging with conquerors at Yorktown.
Yorktown where first did haughty Britain see
That fair one, who late did humbly bend the knee,
Sitting enthroned beside her.
Or with Agnes and my Mildred walked
And watched the slight tossing of the dying wave;
And held no man in all the land so blest,
Not e'en its chief, as Robert Edward Lee.

Oft have I wound these heights of Arlington,

I pass, and I return no more.
O most unhappy thought, it may not be!
The walls a Custis reared shall know no more a Lee.
For now there is a budding conflict in the speech,
In the rose-dappled east I see arise
Clouds ominous. Yawns the cyclone's funnelled
mouth,
I hear the tornado's dull long roar,
The warning portent grim Disaster sounds before.
Now all Virginia is one breath, clamoring
For war. Let calm men 'ware, since one mistake,
Tho' God forgive the error, will, yet alas,
Go thundering down the eternities
In all its entailed sequels.

If an eye,
An arm, ay, the poor life of Robert Lee
Might yet intact preserve this Union, all
Freely were it given. I for mine country
Have taught in her Academe, trod her civic ways,
Beheld the parted lips of the gorge,
The mountain lifted for the storm to scourge.
For her sate astern the unsteady skiff,
Anear the yellowing rapids, where doth swirl
The rolling Rio Grande. For her climbed stern
Chapultepec, all fire to the crest.
Shall bear that day's scar to my tomb.
For her have closed with the red Indian
By southern swamp, or chartless plain,
Vast vistas of solitude. Thought I to die
In Washington's Union and my sire's.
Speak now that father, Light-Horse-Harry, speak!
And give your early-orphaned boy, bewildered
At the parting of the ways, your counsel.
Washington, soul-father of Mary Custis' sire,

Twenty-Four

Advise me at this juncture! Nay, the dead
Speak not to me. Slavery! Had I four millions,
They were freed! But 'tis Virginia, that demands,
I can not lift my hand against my state,
My children's heritage.

This faithful sword,
Save in defense of mine own native state,
I ne'er again desire to draw. 'Tis she,
Virginia hath decreed, nor Robert Lee.

Now is the battle single on, the strife
Imperial begun, and we must draw
To the finish. We cross with no Hessian
Hireling, no lean Mexican, the dervish
Of the Occident, no beaded savage,
But our own kindred, prattling in round-eyed in-
fancy

The same accents. Learned in the same lore,
Reverencing the same ancestral deeds
Of honor. We must set 'gainst keen
Lithe traders, hunters of the Northern lakes,
The brawn of inland cities. The strength
Of rolling prairies—prairies the Dead Sea
Of the earth. In his last war,
Robert Lee, one who has held at bay
The Indian, and Montezuma's swart devotee,
Draws with his equal, fights his last fight with
men!

Closed the idyl of Mary Custis and of Robert Lee.
Let us lay aside the precious littleness
Of village feuds. The purse-proud,
And the place-proud's puffed-up consequence.
Let each offended seek his neighbor out,
Purging his conduct now of his offence,

Since these must wage soon in no sep'rate strife.

And now a last salute unto my flag,
That I must raise my hand against to-morrow.
Oft was I troubled when I 'fended thee,
Wounded neath thy folds, I had thought to lie
Length on my bier, all draped about with thee;
Virginia hath decreed that I must strike at thee.
The Union was my left hand, and my state
The right.

Dreaming, I see, conflicts to be,
Warriors dying in sunsets, twilights
Among the slain, old men kneeling in a hail
Of spears. Maidens lift their hands up to the
white clouds;
The doomed and smitten hosts of absent queens.
The frightened comet cross the sky doth flee
With streaming tresses wild.
The loveliness of all the world is folded up
Among the stars.

While now I am as one,
Who treads mid-wise a barren isthmus strait,
That eastward leads to sudden sullen shores,
And in the west lies by an inland waste,
Where ne'er hath sandal crost, nor eye hath
peered;
Whereof no man hath seen the end of each;
Naught near but sunken keels, torn spar,
Who needs must pass, while all his day doth fill
With a numb, dumb, hollow-dropping chill,
Who lonely standeth 'neath the lonely stars.
The wild fowl harks unto the reedy cove,
And the great wave wheels down to the graves
Of the dead. Sadly I arise and go,
To share the miseries of my people pass.

CANTO TWO.

Enter Randolph.

Lee—"Ah! Randolph, who, I held, still overseas,
Welcome, thrice welcome, tho' to Arlington."

Ran.—"I have this day returned,
That Randolph as of yore,
Ardent with the yearning of the youth
Toward his grave elder comrade.

Nay, not my cloak—
I elect to dwell in th' comparative
Degree of order."

Lee—"Fame, have you gained it?"

Ran.—"Fame, or ill-fame turns on a word, kind
sir,
Since there be grand-dukes the world would never
know,
But Dante spied them in th' Inferno."

Lee—"Dante, so you gained Florence, what did
you there?"

Ran.—“I brushed the bloom from off the grape
of pleasure,
But ne’er to find it tainted. Mid diptychs
And mid Raphaels made me frate with monks
Who love good wine, good Latin, and who hold
The Tenth Muse, the Lost Pleiad, was Selection;
The hand restrained, the art austere,
Measure not man in another’s mold,
Betray not Beauty for a syllable.

(Sings) In a country swarded
With grasses and flowers,
Garlanded, guarded,
By hedges and bowers;
With aperatures peeping
Thro’ thickets of vine,
And pastures up-creeping
Of eglantine—
Swept from a terrace
With roses railed,
On to a lattice
With roses trailed,
Blow mild winds, blow, set ye
Golden sails on a velvet sea.

Saw not with Reason’s cold gray eye, nor knit
Experience’s stern brow. But with Youth’s sweet
Unreason dropt th’ Enthusiast’s plummet down
Unsounded depths. Full many an unsung Bice
Guides her mute worshiper among the stars.
Myself have seen the one true moment
In a whole false life. Since Time’s the draw-
bridge
’Tween eternities.

Twenty-Eight

Yea, I have journeyed far, seen many lands.
That Bird of Paradise, Swinburne, saw,
Browning, who gives not vanilla wafers.
Myself did hear that golden Voice
Of the long Victorian day, Alfred
The Great. Myself did list the lowly bard,
His fustian verse, with velvet insets interspersed.
Why should we toil o'er these few roods of earth
Who may possess the stars? Death, whether
By gun-shot wound, or microbe, the end's
The same! There was aye the art to serve,
The faith to keep; tho' I dwelt 'mong those oft,
Whose life was in the Conditional Mood.
I have seen for other souls, the guilty deed
Rolled on the sun, and blotted out the noon.
Not mine the broad flower-strewn descent;
Seen men possessed as with the unique
Inevitable agony of one,
Who falls thro' space in a dream.

Ah what is man that he should dare
To take the life he cannot give? Yet I—
I'm clean enow to take the hand of Lee,
One like the sea, clear and bafflingly simple,
—I never wronged a flower girl, the while
She had my mother's breasts.

Lee, ah! Dante
Of that mediaeval passion-flower, that strange
growth,
The Divina Commedia—ah, cheated
Dante, you lived too long ago,
Who'd have set this gentle figure in Paradisio!
The New-world's Old-world-gentleman."

Lee.—“Did you drop the plummet far?”

Ran.—“Ay,
To its very length. Call Randolph Sir Rash,
So you'll allow Sir Constant. One who delays
Not to proffer service to his friend at need
And state.”

Sings

“Not all of England's stately piles,
Nor thousand-year-old velvet sod,
Were worth one fair Virginia shire
Where man is man as stamped by God.”

“Found the dear ladye gentle. Her hair
Surpasses all the sun, her eyes surplant
The skies. The rose fears no rival,
The diamond no peer.”

Sings

“There's a hostelry, so the fair tale goes,
Where Love's lord host, at the Sign of the Rose;
Across far reaches of unsung seas,
Leagues of sea and of under-stars.
Filled full with many a costliest thing,
With gems of heart for furnishing.
A viol thwart—(the dance still 'scapes)
Has some wistaria flung its grapes.
Some ancient poet's folio,
Some yellowed song-scroll 'scented so.
There Petrarch passes in silhouette,
Tasso his high-born love hath met.
Shakespeare garlanded, rainbow Keats,

Thirty

Spencer the purple-and-gold each greets;
Scarabeus Poe e'en, for sweet sake of Lenore,
Hath a hall in this inn where he's tenant galore.
While all about, and everywhere
Blows the musky air,
With its burthen of Yesterdays,
Its breath of forgotten Mays.
There would I dwell, right content to be
A nameless dreamer by a nameless sea."

"I mind me sir of Fairfax' song for you,
And Mary Custis."

Sings

"Now all ye gentle lovers,
Wherever ye may be,
For the sake of Mary Custis,
Think kind on Robert Lee.

For ne'er was Highland Mary,
Nor Annie o' the Dee,
More leal than is this Mary,
Who'd wed wi Robert Lee.

Nor any queen is fairer
Beneath the rolling sun,
Than this Virginia maiden,
The Rose of Arlington.

The sweetest name is Mary
That all this world doth boast,
Tho' sweeter breathed above the cot,
Than lifted in a toast.

Now where's a name more seemly

A brave man and a free,
Than loyal, laurelled, Robert,
Right worthy Robert Lee?

Heaven bless thee, Mary Custis,
The fair Virginia bride,
God keep that noble gentleman,
Who standeth by thy side."

"Ay, I gained a modest fame withal, thro'
One sole picture. We artists set our hands
To limn our high ideal manhood, thus
I drew a portrait, fixed a countenance,
The faithful mirror of a noble mind.
Hung it where one placed English Alfred, one
His Arthur, one his Sidney. There I,
Amidst their best of kings, did set,
With Nature's stamp of majesty upon
His brow—the face that Michel Angelo
Had loved—the citizen American,
The courtly country gentleman,
The modest, simple, true, unworldly,
Great Virginian,
My youth's ideal, Lee of Arlington.
When he was all the world to me,
And all the world was Robert Lee.
The peer of any English knight,
As leal as vow-bound Paladin
Who forced the purple gates of Palestine.
The critics bushy-eyed-brow'd, spectacled,
Highest and central placed, and crowds surged
round
All the long day, buzz'd approbation,
Soft applause, that swelled in murmurous waves."

Thirty-Two

Lee—"The picture was well painted, then; a priest,
A fisherman, a Breton peasant, done as rarely
Had drawn the plaudits down from all the same."

Ran.—"The pencil did but echo to the heart,
The loving touch, the tireless hand."

Lee—"I thank you, lad, for all the honor done,
On the pedestal where your young affections
Placed me, I shall not stand for others."

Ran.—"The world may find you yet, as I long
since—

Aside—(One who dwelt on great men,
Nor knew himself a greater.)"

"Lad! I'm two-score,
When Life's at its fullest, the soul's at its noon.
Tho' it has been lieder, wieder, down my life,
All youth, art, love, for me *helas!*
A lute, a loaf and a small mild glass,
I can be at need earnest as sportive.
Once in an ample sea were budded

Two single vellet islets,
As lily and as vi'lets,
As ruby, pearl, diverse.

Now the pine tree cries out for the palm,
But the palm sighs not for the pine!
(Aside) View the Devil's masterpiece, civil war,
A fratacidal strife!

(Aloud) These states,
I would they might go out like princesses,
Eleven princesses, tall and wonderful,

Not like gray figures huddled thro' the storm.
I have come from over main to proffer
My sword to Virginia, sir—to you."

Lee—"What know you of warfare, friend, a sword
Is not a mahl-stick."

Ran.—"Pause, kind sir, and know,
The blood, that stirs these veins all unafraid,
Is of Pocahontas, staunch Indian maid.
Moreo'er abroad, they styled me Steelwrist."

Lee—"Then I, your commander, and your friend,
receive
You to Virginia's corps, come what may,
Be with me to the finish of the fray."

Ran.—"I draw for Lee and Virginia!"

Lee—"Draw for Virginia, pray for Lee."

CANTO THREE.

Four years later,

The night before the surrender of Lee at
Appomattox.

Within his low and slender tent the noble leader
paced,

The moonlight set cool marbles about him for a
floor,

While his slim couch, all ivory, with grille and
groin o'ertraced,

A milk-white screen barbaric swirled free at his
lone door.

But ne'er his heavy eyes beheld mild pearl and
silver field,

His gaze was on a ragged host, that on the morn
must yield.

And in the still untroubled sky he saw no glitter-
ing wain,

But all his gallant troopers, who gave their lives
in vain.

Lee—"The bright sun hath sunken beyond the
cold sea,

And Hope hath sunken with me;

The sad wave is breaking upon the lone beach

And the heart is breaking of Lee."

Then broke the heart of noble Lee, no nobler e'er
did beat,

The faithful heart of Robert Lee, in that moon's
silver sleet.

Morning of the surrender.

Ran.—(Looking towards Union troops)

“Tis easy to enfranchise others' slaves,
Had these been yours, standing for values,
Had ye so strained yourselves to free them?
It may be that we scourged our “Toms,”
I never saw it tho' in all Virginia;
Some sly Silas 'twere, base men misuse power
Towards anything defenceless, whate'er the term,
Condition: slave, serf, pauper, factory child,
Kinsman. Yea, I have seen in Botolph's storied
town,

A churl misuse his nephews, as I ne'er did see
A Southron drive his slaves. A chid child fear
The termagant mother's eye, as never slave
Evaded mine. Nigh mediaeval walls
One leash his wife, the mother of his sons,
Unto the plow with steers. Slavery did descend
But unto us from your, as our forefathers.
I have seen, that sad thing a queen, more serf
Than these of mine, ye rouse the cry with “slaves.”
Ay, Rosamond Randolph sleeps tonight, all
wrapped

In stilly slumber and in silver trance,
Our child upon her breast, sole warded by a slave;
And when I told him Lincoln set him free,
Slowly responded: “Had I selected,
I had earlier been freed. At Naples,
Cairo, or Algiers. I had slipped 'mong
Dark men lightly. You had not followed.”

Thirty-Six

Then once more turning, "I have pondered long
On these conditions twixt your race and mine;
My grandsire was by slaver brought in chains
Unto this soil, who had in his own land

Been born a prince. A prince, master, and such
a prince!

A prince of naked women and of men;
Nose-ring in nostril, thighs herb-juiced dyed,
A ring of feathers round the waist for cov'ring;
Black-barked huts, cane roofs, and roots for food,
A cloven stone for weapon. The slaver
Sold my grandsire thus to yours. Ay, a prince,
Who in his own Afric had been free!

Yea, free for what? To spoil and be despoiled,
Destroy or be destroyed! A dusky prince,
Who, by the direful chance of most unfriendly
war,

Might have become another savage' slave.

Or, worse than all the vilest white man's cruelties,
Have given his bones to furnish forth that rival's
feast.

He, that prince, died, clothed, housed, fed, press-
ing

That master's hand, breathing that master's faith,
Who taught his slave the Christ. Those chains,
The beast crouched at one end, the other linked
The upright soul! But for the slaver, still
The black man might be eating his brother
In the jungle! Were I then better
Randolph's slave, or fellow savage' on the
Guinea coast?

Your race did go in chains to dungeons, exile,
To preserve that faith to us. We receive
All freely, it hath cost us ne'er a scar.

The slaver was Christ's mission-ship, it was
God's means to work the black man's great salva-
tion out—

Peace, nor decry His ways, His instruments.
My people, truth, have suffered grievous wrongs
From yours, but more of good. The Saxon, yea,
Hath toiled nine centuries, each century
A hundred years, each year twelve months, each
month

Full thrice ten days; a million million
Of your race have striven, planned, failed, com-
pleted,
Coiled and recoiled, now forward, backward
thrust,

At forge, plow, loom, mine, in laboratories, camp,
To leave his little work the world to profit.
We came, what tho' in chains, alike to share the
fruits,

Who had not striven. Ye, who did with patience,
all

The forces of the earth, and air, and sea
Subdue, achieved as well for us.

Raiment, utensils, medicines, commerce, arts,
A thousand thousand means to lift the race
We too divide. Ay, Randolph's slave is housed
Better than English Alfred. We from the Stone
Age leapt

Full statured unto yours. The slave ship e'er
Was steered upon Christ's mission, master,
And the black man found upon these shores
The Holy Rood; grew to a knowledge of his soul,
And saw the cross blood-red. And gained the
Christ.

I, this day, but for that slaver, might, sir, be
Spearing mine unclothed foeman in the wilds.

Thirty-Eight

But wert the curse, should it not their foreheads
scorch,
Their sons rather, who manned the ships,
And rolled the forc'd man cargoes to these shores,
Than theirs, who did but purchase? Ne'er slave-
ship
Did put from Southern port, nor Southern gold
Did furnish; but from the North, ay, Northern
greed—
Yet do the Northrons' sons shriek strange curses
On th' South, assign dread doom, dark punish-
ments,
While yet their sires' slave-ships stand unrotting

In their harbors. How then darst judge
The Northron of his customer?

Let be—

I am content to walk by you, my master-friend,
Loyal, holding that I am working out
My destiny, and leave another
Generation if it will, to seek
Rather to stand alone.
Parchment 'my master' may deny
Ne'er quill erase 'my friend'!
So slight were all my fetters found
I scarce did know that I was bound,
Till thou didst tell me I was free,

Since I was fettered unto thee.
There is a link that binds us,
Naught but the grave can sever;
Upon his heart the faithful slave
Wears 'master's' face forever!

I am aweary of it all, I am content
To walk by your side in life, lie at your feet
In death, master and slave mingling their dust
In common earth—" "So gave my servant
Utterance to me."

Before the surrender.
Soldiers seeing Fitzhugh Lee riding across the

field—

"He's the nephew of his uncle,
In his flower of youth today,
He's the nephew of his uncle,
And what better can ye say?
When the strife has died away,
When his hair is thick with gray,
When he stands before the people
Then let all the people say,
'He's the nephew of his uncle'!
And what better can they say?"

An' he ride from land to land,
An' he sail from sea to sea,
He's the nephew of his uncle,
Ay, he's royal Fitzhugh Lee.
Now he standeth at your city,
But no stranger guest is he,
He's the nephew of his uncle,
It's 'Right welcome Fitzhugh Lee'!"

A Soldier—

"O, God, they are playing for the last time
in the Confederacy, Dixie!"

Second Soldier—

“O, God, roll on Thy systems now and bring
tomorrow! How can I live to this dread
day’s close.”

Third Soldier—

“Now is the noon burnt out,

Now griev’ed Day hath stole away,
And Twilight sighs into her sleeve of gray.”

Randolph—

“They did not sail on seas of milk,
In any ships of amber,
Nor crossed with blanching foes, nor waged a
fornight’s fray.”

Soldier (aside)—

“The gay-tender Randolph,
Ripe for a song or a challenge.
That battle-barge urged by rose-water.”

A Captain—

“We yield to Hunger, nor to Grant;
Hunger’s field marshal in this fray!”

Randolph—

“They have pitched on a sorry Richmond,
They have come to a plagued Atlanta.”

A Lieutenant—

“Not Grant discomforts me the more,
But gaunt Tecumseh Sherman keen,
With all those splendid Ewings at his back.
He’s my select aversion.”

Soldier—

“Set him to hull a bin of pinions.”

Randolph (looking towards Union lines)—

“When one man fights as three,

The Nations draw nigh to see.

Ye must have held us of fair worth, kind sirs,

And honorable renown, have set

A most high estimate on our poor selves,

To spill your blood and treasure, us to keep

Unwilling by your sides. Now then

Are we the substantial base and instruments

Of all your glory. Who knew your leaders,

Ere they strove with us? Had immortality

Your heroes, closed they not with ours? It were

More honor to have o’ercome us, to have felt

Southern steel (steel the world will not let idly
rust)

Than to have stung little Holland, ancient Spain.

’Twill be your glory in the years to be,

Ay, to have striven with the ranks of Lee.”

Fourth Soldier (looking where Lee paces)—

“Flower of the South, star on her blue

Unsullied shield, Captain of the common

Soldier—Robert Lee. (Aside)—

Th’ unvarnished unvanquished common soldier.

(Aloud)—

Knight of the white armor, soldier of the snow-
white plume.

His tender nature was one vast estate,

The meanest soldier might approach and dwell
thereon.”

Randolph—

“His the distinction that doth conquer Time,
One born with two right hands,
 One born silver
To die golden, he.”

Fifth Soldier—

“He stands for our best, right willing shall we be,
To let the world all estimate the South by Lee.”

(Randolph)—

“Alas! for words perfected unto purple!”

Soldier—

“The central figure he for four years terrible,
Of an all-admiring world. Ye now see traced
On that brow worn, that fully silvered hair,
Moments when every breath was a prayer.
Instants so tense, in awful stillness bound,
The very silence made a sound.”

Fifth Soldier—

“His knees are worn with holy prayer,
Untainted is his breath with wine or weed,
Stranger his lips to an unholy word.”

First Soldier—

“Canvass shall not show,
Story shall not know,
A more certain glory than doth glow
O'er Lee and his ragged rebels in gray.”

Randolph (looking toward Union troops)—

“He might have been your leader, and nor ours,

Heading his victors nor a vanquished host,
Had he but chosen to betray his State.

(Aside)—

See in this grief a further woe,
List ye with the slain, Robert Lee, commander,
His heart hath perished with his cause this day.

O State,

Thou canst not set him on an eminence too great,
Who gave his all for thee.
Canst a space unroll, Earth, that is wide as the sky,
A sepulchre deep as the ocean's bed,
A burial place for a Nation slain—
In her ashes the seed of empires to be?
Sweep in one requiem out, ye four winds,
Gathered up from four corners, that no man hath
seen,
For the South's sepulchered sons today!

God, who

With one hand grasps Heaven's flaming spheres,
The other smooths earth's lowliest flower,
That God, who sees as from a world, that rolls
Thro' burning mists, the prayers ascend, and touch
Thy feet of fervent Captains who alike appeal,
Each to the self same Heaven and Thee, who war
For diverse causes in an earthly strife:
Thou, who doth one petition answer, one deny,
That burn with equal faith, we know not why,
I crave, who hesitate to pull a weed,
Lest God Himself should pluck me out,
Who am His weed indeed,
Will rift Thy Heavens, and send a pitying light
To our gray'd hearts, that all men know now are

Forty-Four

All sadder than a darkened pool, that lies
As one black blossom on a moor, and sees
The falling leaves amid the falling rain,
And glowing Leo cold, Arcturus slain."

Soldier—

"Their cause is dead, but not their names,
Their deeds are fagots yet for flames."

Second Soldier—

"My South, that isle of roses in a summer sea,
Leagues of roses, divine leagues of rose-trees;
Now a single rose-tree bloometh all alone,
In an old garden, all, all alone is she."

Randolph—

"O, Virginia, the Crusaders flung,
In peril, in among the heathen huge,
The heart of Robert Bruce, and won a mighty fray.
Do thou, in thy extremity of Doubt,
Take up the heart of Robert Lee, and fling
And turn the wavering balance for the Just.

God I thank, I lived no earlier age,
Who did, lost much, he knew not Robert Lee.
Ne'er did the world behold such fierce defense,
Nor English race will claim more glorious son.

Captain and liege in the conflict yet,
Their names beneath the planets may trace,
'Tis the blade of Lee of Virginia
Strikes the stars aside for his place.

O, fame folded up among the clouds,
Not matched at anywheres upon this sad grey
earth—

One who how great he was ne'er knew,
But thought whate'er he did the least could do."

Soldier—

"The pen that doth this name indite,
A golden plume the while shall glow,
The soiled lip that doth take on this,
An instant's space is cleansed."

A Captain—

"Ah! Lee's a name Columbia
Will ne'er from her defenses spare!"

Soldier—

"We strove each man for a state, one state,
To find in him a nation."

Second Soldier—

"We stand at Appomattox!
And this is the crest of the ages."

Texas Soldier—

"Broad Texas, on her mighty breast
Britain and Gaul might lie,
Rose Persia, storied Greece there rest,
Their ancient feuds put by.
Imperial England's girdled breadth
Might girt alone her wrist;
The world's historic battle-fields
Each on her soil confine,
Their priceless loam with brazen guns
Their monumental sign.
She to that flag cerulean
Her glowing star did loan,

Doth in no lessened splendor now
Receive once more her own."

Soldier (looking at Lee)—

"How is he aged, our leader, the telling white
Besprinkles those dark locks, a year of war
Is full as twenty winters. War takes up
Rosy boys and sets them down in middle life.
I dreamed I heard him cry the latest night:
'Ah! Azrael, scribe-angel, blot the name
Of Robert Lee from off thy scrolls, and let
It sound no more within the ears of men.'"

Randolph—

"He'd have enough to do then sirs, to keep
Him active for some time. Since every tenth child
Born these sad four years past thro' all the South,
Hath borne the name of Lee.

Since all the Confed'racy was one front
To bear the star of Lee. Nor ever one
Of his lieutenants loyal moved to draw
With pock-marked Envy off his golden pil'd
renown,

But did rejoice thereat and builded ever higher.
The priest grows husky at the font from saying
o'er:

'I now baptize thee Robert Lee.'"

To the pale polar regions lone,
To the odorous isles of the sea,
Our sons' sons will bear the name of Lee,
Till every crimson-belted zone
Familiar with that name hath grown.

There are not lads enow, and so the girls

Offer rosemary. Unseals her native pearls,
A shining sheet unrolls of curls,
The young head's threaded gold,
When the mother doth 'Roberta' call.
Roberta Lee will trouble many an honest swain
Some fifteen years to be. Since Lee's a name
That rounds right well a song, that fills
A lute as trumpet. (Looking to the North)
Had he been lesser, ye had been younger,
Your way some ells more short, this fatal day
Some seasons earlier set. Now have ye been
But active to his glory. The North
Had may torches, the South one beacon—Lee.

The rebel cry we'll practice, nor forget it.
Ye'll be right glad, when ye are flying
At some foreign throat, with scanty force,
Hemmed in by stratagems, assailed
And desperate, when all is fairly lost,
Ye'll be right thankful then to hear
That slogan heading your relief to you!"

The Surrender (Lee speaking to himself, looking
towards his forces)—

"Now is the hour struck, the ax fallen,
And we yield—let us yield like men,
Seeing it is better to accept defeat,
Than to war longer in a hopeless strife,
Shedding most priceless blood in effort vain.
O, my soldiers! comrades, brothers, children
Have ye grown. True, I knew you not by name,
Not each staunch face, but when I scanned your
cloak,

Forty-Eight

The chaste and tender gray, I took you as my
flesh.

I carried you against my breast by day,
Tossed troublous for your weal at night.
Commended unto me these four years since,
Were you by your free choice. Mine own poor
self

Considered, charged chief in the affairs
And conditions of red War. Of this now doom'd
Confed'racy. Most willing had I passed
All unto more potent counsel, one
More able. But you would have naught of this;
And I have served, however illy, compassed
Round by ne'er abating dangers, to th' best
Of my poor ability; hemmed in
And harried every side. I would
That you had had a better in your front,
One all more fit to bear the yoke and burthen
Of command. When staring Ruin did unlock
The gates, the unchecked flood swept forth.
When golden Jackson fell, then was my right arm
Stricken. Maimed have I gone from that most
adverse hour.

While now it is as were my bosom scarred
A thousand sword-thrusts, old scars, fresh wounds,
And bleeding gaps, that were my brave lieutenants'
deaths.

My armies, every foot-soldier, ay, each horse
Fallen, were mine own peril. Now am I done
With a thousand sep'rate wounds to death.
I may not weep, since all my eyes are as
A cistern dry. I cannot speak, my throat
Is as a spring all choked with rock and soil.
But here I, Robert Lee, have fought my last fight,

Raised my last blade, fenced my last foe—save
Death.

Henceforth I do but counsel.

I have done

To all my poor ability all things
For your best profit. We have warred
With kindred. With the noblest foes, that ever
set

Their bayonets 'gainst opposing ranks.
Let us accept defeat as men, as Southerners,
As for the last time—Confederates, as
—I think they'll not deny us this—Americans!
Publish us unto the world e'en now,
How vanquished men can yield proudly,
Live honorably, die unashamed. This bright
sword,

—The courteous conqueror spared it—may
It lead you in a mightier strife, t' accept
Defeat as I (as I, for the last time
Your chief, my kinsmen, brothers, sons!)
Until our victors may be e'en right proud to know,
They had such valrous spirits for their foe!"

Randolph (aside)—

"Let me stand in the fierce noon of God's great
Day.

Ay, when th' archangel hath unrolled
As a flame in his palm, the Scrolls of Gold;
Pray me one prayer up among the spheres,
When God gathers in the centuries,
With fire and frankincense girt the years,
As a grain of sand the cycles He sees,
May I stand with Lee and the Gray."

(Lee passes apart and kneels.)

Fifty

Randolph—

“I think that mighty Michael feels,
The leader of God’s shining hosts,
The greatest Captain Heaven boasts,
A kinship thrill his high being,
That spreads from glittering wing to wing,
When low the Christian warrior kneels.”

Randolph (still looking towards Lee)—

“Still as in th’ outset turn all eyes to him,
O ne’er so truly victor as when vanquished he;
Ah! Whither shall we look in all this weary
world,
Save only unto him first after Christ.

O, teach us how to conquered live and how de-
feated die.

Since now there lies about us but a bitter sea,
Where all night long the loud winds shriek, and
far

The moon shall rise upon a barren land,
Where no flower groweth. And the sun,
We shall not see the sun at anywheres
In all the world again! Unless it be,
That Christ thro’ him, and such as he, shall rift
once more
The gloom, and bring anew the Day.”

Go not where Glory waits, ’tis she,
Hath gone along the way with thee.

CANTO FOUR

Lee (passing into the tent)—

“Leave me an hour alone. Let none draw nigh
Save Randolph.”

Randolph—

“Fairfax Randolph this doth your honors seal,
This brave particular hour! O, chiefest flower,
And consummation of secretest desire—
Not mine the hand to lift his brow the bays,
But pluck the heartease for his breast.
But never any bay appears
So fresh as that kept green by tears.”

(Outside, Union soldiers standing silently,
Confederates trailing their muskets, sheath-
ing their swords, weeping.)

Soldiers—

“There goes Flash-and-Forward
Randolph, he that fought like fiends.”

Soldiers—

“For Grant the cheers,
For Lee the tears,

Fifty-Two

The cheers they die with the dying day,
But the tears, the tears, they are wept alway."

Soldier—

"E'en the foe shall yet bare brow at his bier.
He hath passed into the large, now all about him
lies
A splendor never seen by mortal eyes."

Soldier—

"Of years full four hath he borne the strain
And fardels of this mad'ning warfare; while
Red-hoofed War did toss his curdling foam
O'er farthest seas—shake his uneasy mane!
Betimes we stood upon the golden tops of Hope,
Then were cast down again to low Despair.
Artillery, assaults, legions hurled their force,
Armies retired, fresh battalions drawn,
Day by day his narrowing, destruction confident,
Fair-faced boys last to fill the gaps of beards.
Ever he only, front, superior.
The North had many captains, the South one—
Lee.

When the hot adverse winds did blow,
They spent most force on him,
Chief pillar of the tottering Confed'racy.
Troops from the lakes, troopers from the prairies,
First cousins of the moors—hurled! The cities,
The vasty inland. Ordnance thundering
Thundering ordnance! Horse and foot pressing,
Repulsed. reinforced. resisted, recoiled,
Aided, abetted, again 'gainst him hurled!
Nor delayed, nor abated, springs, summers,

Falls, winters, springs, summers again,
Season circling circling season. Ay—”

(Song)

“It’s a long way to Richmond from Washington
o’er,
It took some men, ay, and a full many more,
Four years to reach it, four years and no more,
Few gained it who started, chiefs fell at the side,
And the fresher went down in their boasting pride.
But the same arm K-E-P-T the brazen door,
It’s a rare way to Richmond from Washington
o’er.”

“Brave his lieutenants, advent’rous, or steadfast,
Trenching in the very heart of strife,
Upholding the long day all of Ajalon;
Yet on his shoulders pressed the burthen chief,
The conduct and the issue. Now see ye
Th’ betraying white, that threads those late dark
locks,
Each hair the record of a valiant field;
The lines upon that lofty brow, the trenches
Furrowed by the share of War! On that front,
That noble front is graven all the passage
And continuance of war.
‘Outnumbered nor outgeneraled,’ write of Lee.

As a great dam when leaks begin,
And gaps and rents appear, and four score streams
Trickle thro’ little crevice and slight fissure,
Currents unstemm’d, channels unturned more,
Rush on the weakening structure, that now sways,
Bends, yields and the furious torrent whirls,

Fifty-Four

Rushes its mighty volume, and sweeps th' ob-
struction down,
The unrestrained destruction 'gins!
Now let us clothe him at this Appomattox,
O, such a Hastings for such a Harold—
With a great cloak woven of our fidelity,
With pearl and broidery of our loyalty,
Belted and clasp'ed, that none puissant be
To cast this garment of our Love from Lee.
And it shall fold him in such warmth, that he
Shall know nor chill of dense defeat,
The feel of th' fall, nor hint of wintry rage,
Till doth that countenance, the faithful scroll
Of noble character, light up anon with cheer.
Success had brought perchance a fleeting fame.
Defeat hath crowned him with immortality."

A Mountaineer speaks—

"From the deep unpeopled forest,
From the mountain's sanctuary,
From the forest's cloistered shade,
That dim religious space, I came;
He to me seemed the perfect forest
Living and wide. He spake to fill my heart
With all delight. No hasty pudding
Of mere words. He who prates of birth
Or breeding lets the world suspect
It were not then self-evident.
No great Duncan of a little clan,
This simple, strong Virginian.
As some one I had dreamed of just
Above my level. High, sustained and even,
Ere shall I see his face in mountains, forests,
Stars. Stars, other worlds Christ died for,
It may be."

Soldier—

“We go forth unto our homes once more,
Tho’ scorched and pillaged, th’ soil is still
own,

But he, our chief, no rood is his
Of those ancestral acres.
His land is waste with foemen’s graves,
The alien keeps his gate.”

All—

“His land is where the jasmine blooms,
His hearth is where the swallow flies
From leagues of summer to lands of sun,
His home is in the Southern heart,
There lies his Arlington!”

Second Soldier—

“His home is confiscate to whom—Mankind,
He hath but exchanged his lands for a nation,
His heritage for deathless fame.”

Kentucky Soldier—

“On old Kentucky’s caverned ground
My roof-tree smoulders low,
My sire houseless stands beside,
His locks are damp with woe.
But chiefest shaft in my breast sent,
Is that bowed Chieftain in his tent.
Now Sorrow doth her sable don,
Doth Grief, her Iron Crown put on.”

Second Soldier—

“Story shall see
Length in this conquered Lee
The greatest Lee.”

Third Soldier—

“Go further, and say more, friend,
The wheel goes round from dark to light,
The world to noon from middle night,
Where now is winter shall yet be May,
Shall nations yet contend for the Gray,
Lee yet be a name to conquer by.”

15-year-old Louisiana Soldier Boy—

“I foilowed Gustave Beauregard,
From Louisiana’s plush-like sward,
Where all the yellow afternoon
Doth idly push the brown quadroom
Along the citron-hung lagoon.
There lilies droop adown their milk,
The scarlet petals drop their silk.
My mother waits by the moss’d bayou,
Weeping, sleeping, the long night thro’.
My sire fell, I took his place,
To keep the faith of the Creole race.
My younger brother stands to slip
In mine, did I fall at yon gun’s huge lip.
Where the bells of Rose Croix are pealing, ap-
pealing,
To the beautiful Creole girl rapt kneeling,
In the Pageant State,
That yearly rolls to its Carnival,
Its panoramic fete,
There is space and place, an’ he wills, for Lee,
By the wiling, smiling, beguiling sea,
By the ceaseless, Croesus Creole sea!”

Soldiers—

“Babes with bayonets!
What wast such a Tiger then,

To have bequeathed such worthy whelps."

Texas Soldier—

"Thro' Texas folds his name is blown
And round the summer pass.
The lonely herder on the plain
Doth lift it in his lusty strain,
And toss it to the points of stars,
Ay, to the crimson five of Mars.
There nine and ninety acres lie,
All yellowing to the yellowing sky,
For each the foe hath ta'en."

Florida Soldier—

"Where palm-fanned Florida dreaming lies
With deep-sea coral lips;
All girdled round by sea-blue walls,
His name upon her senses falls,
Like lotus on the Golden River,
Lee's e'er, forever, ever!
Ay, all the Palm-land waits for him,
She strains her eyes thro' twilights dim,
That queen all girt by jewelled isles,
Lists, pauses, lists once more, and smiles."

Georgia Soldier—

"Savannah, she whose name is sweet
As comb that drips with amber;
Late forced unwilling Yule-tide gift
From Sherman unto Lincoln;
But when she gives herself to Lee,
The scene how changed, the gift how free!
The sounds roll on the velvet sea,
And stir the league-long rolling waves,
That deepen into diamond caves."

Fifty-Eight

The light-tower on its islet far,
Doth tremble to its quivering star,
And thundering o'er the hollow main,
Sweep back between her gates again."

Alabama Soldier—

"Alabama, clime whose name
Glides soft as rippling water,
From Southern beauty's velvet throat,
The siren's living daughter.
As plum'd swan or silver boat
Upon some airy seas remote,
That open into fairy port.

Half rose, half pearl,

That Southern girl,

A vision that would make an earl
Barter his coronet for a curl,
Pledged at her feet his titles hath,
Lays down his ermine for her path.
But never any space so fair,
But Lee, ay, Lee, hath regions there.
The bay, a liquid Eden waits,
And smiling harbors stretch their gates."

Tennessee Soldier—

"Far o'er the winding Tennessee
His fame doth float perpetually,
And into passion'd octaves breaks
Till lonely craig with music wakes—
Hills that to Song in loyalty
Echo aye doth vow, hath he.
Ay, shining mount and fruitful vale
Shall tell th' imperishable tale.
Yea, as a torch upon the stream

The name of Lee for aye doth gleam.
Let him the peak, the plain but claim,
He e'er hath title by that name;
The seamy line of yon sharp ridge,
As the blue flame of oils each ledge;
While light o'er yon grave mountains spread
As lily flakes o'er marbles shed,
His stainless fame o'er the dim corn,
Thro' all the windy world is borne.
Then skiff, and cliff, and scar and plain,
Lone farm, or town waits his domain.
Ay, bird, and rill and all things free
Voice, and rejoice the deeds of Lee."

Arkansas Soldier—

"Nor tardy doth Arkansas come
To proffer province to her chief,
Not all the breadth of mighty Rome
To Caesar proud wert ere more fief.
Light as doth blow the falling leaf,
His battles o'er, the warrior rests
Upon his grateful country's breast.

(Sings) What tho' the chieftain lies
Far from the battle,
What tho' no bugles blow,
No cannon rattle.
Naught should the chieftain's dust
But the turf cover—
Yet wheresoe'er he lies,
Far or neath well known skies,
Pile, slab discover—
A warrior's a hero's grave
All the world over."

Sixty

Randolph—

“Glory of purple and glory of gold,
Rows of men singers manifold,
Glorified land and glorified sea
All glorying round the glorious Lee.”

The Carolinas—

“Two daughters of one birth are we,
A king’s renown we keep.
Not bust nor die perpetuates
Such mem’ry, as, when he doth sleep,
His name’s bequeathed a land from one,
Who’d wrest it from oblivion.
While noble namesakes oft shed glory
On names, ne’er else were known to story.
To Carolus not crown nor crest
Such brilliance loaned to brow or breast,
As these twin jewels in the west.

In one these two
Blend, one thick, blue
Blameless sapphire,
One hollow deep of scarce-stilled fire;
One blue inverted pyre.
Hues of the sky’s highest heaven bide,
Hues of the sea’s lowest deep do hide;
One gem upon his Ducal hilt,
One leaf upon his wreath.”

Mississippi Soldier—

“O’er Mississippi’s waters fair
His name the willing boat shall bear,
The wealthy mine his fame shall keep,
Where lies her treasure hidden deep.
The Sire of waters, aye his morn

Sees cool Dakota's hills;
All day, he draws unto his breast
A million tribute rills;
At eventide her fruitful lap
His gathered largesse fills;
That heiress of her father's name,
And all his hoarded gain,
She doth her riches Lee acclaim,
No puny currents sway nor strain
The Mississippi of his fame."

Maryland Soldier (speaking as his state) —
"My name was first your battle-cry,
My song your Marseillaise!
My headlands blazed before your eyes,
Down all those dark'ning days;
My battles smoke against the years,
The trumpets cast upon the winds
My triumphs, till the sunset age
To dewey mornings round anew.
For I have touched heroic hands,
My shield has caught your glory.
My stream doth feed immortal seas
Your fame, while burst fresh centuries
On Time's reviving bough;
Forth from mine arms the foe to meet,
He rode, within these found retreat;
Blood of my blood, I met defeat
On Pennsylvanian plain.
I burnt my way up all that steep,
The strife waxed to my crest and waned,
And left me lonely, nor attained
My height in all the war again.
To scorn with Pickett thund'rous bolts
And lightnings round that awful hill,

Was more than any cup to fill
For Vict'r'y's throat to drain.

Over my brow your banner blew,
I was swept a space with a holy wing—
You sang my song, I may not sing
For you, within my breast is dearth;
The song was made in heaven alone
O, South, to fit your dreams on earth.
While noons may rise, and moons may set,
I'll see Virginia beck'ning yet;
Down all the years I'll not forget
My name upon your lips was set;
While year on year, with tear on tear,
My tree shall weep, each mound be wet;
O, wounded heart, here ease regret,
Mem'ry has home, each violet
Is knocker to her silent door;
Along my myrtles, Spring once more
Shall feel her way unstained to you.
Mine his perilous field, my road unto anguish he
wound,
I sit by mine ashen trenches; mine is the crimson
stone;
The land he left furrowed with valor stretches
before him—his own!
(They fell, whose fame is a rolling sphere—
Sank—to rise higher on the other side).
They dying did make me undying.
Is there no roof for his fame full wide,
But a sky? 'tis my sky, I
Nearest—would raise not a roof but a dome.
I am Maryland yea, and I answer,
Virginia—the South—Lee—I come!”

Missouri Soldier—

“Hail, Missouri! mailed Missouri,
Flash your blade, nor fail Missouri,
Flash and lash, nor swerve, but sweep,
Whirl and hurl, and strain the steep;
Never, never, quail, Missouri!
Thrice her strength she dauntless brooks,
Doniphan’s land yet, Marmaduke’s.
East-by-south and south-by-west,
Stonewall-Sterling—held the crest;
Names that burn and fame that flames,
Staunch held Richmond-by-the James.
St. Louis city on the mound;
Tho’ her side is one wide wound,
Unsparring,
Uncaring,
Undespairing,
Youngest, farthest, with your best, she—
Alike—unstayed—hath followed Lee!

—Blackened Border
Scorching ‘Order’—
Flinging, ringing,
Flash and clash!

Of this maiden in the west
In her fiery ashen breast
Chose the Phoenix-bird a nest.
Unprofaned—not strife may move
For him—it is the warmth of Love.”

A Soldier—

“On her war-startled brow
Did early silver eat the blossomed gold.”

Sixty-Four

Soldier—

“In fiery splendor of defeat
Pales little victory.”

Virginia Soldier—

“Offer him, proffer him, whate’er ye cry,
Lee of Virginia will he die!”

(All)—

“The South’s, the whole fair South’s is he,
Her priceless heritage is Lee!
Virginia doth her empire keep,
But she must share her son.

His splendor feeds her shining rills,
All the long gulf his glory fills.”

Georgia Soldier—

“We strove each man for a state, one State,
To find in him a Nation.”

Randolph—

“An alabaster column reared
In moonlight on a snowy height
Was not more blazon’d, blameless, bright!
A fair record and clean honors, sirs,
Foes are ye great enow to award
His meed unto Robert Lee?
Else know his laurel tree doth stand
In other climes, and foreign hands
Shall twine if ye deny.
The world approves tho’ a clan decry,
A race applauds tho’ a faction frown,
And we, who have followed him, fell with him—we,
Not dews but stars on his bays do see.

Yea, men shall win the Southern ear,
That even-deep of pearl shall hear
And varied sounds shall hve. Shall bend
To embassies Friendship may send;
Ay, with a dew-drop fill the eye,
The tattered sleeve of Poverty
Draw forth the mists of sympathy.
Yea, men shall clasp her mighty palm,
—The hand that wears the signet ring
Shall bear alike the balm—

He who would reach the Southern heart,
That secret alcove set apart,
Who'd gain th' inaccessible
Imperial eagles' eyrie well,
Must find the hidden path.
The secret springs that hidden lie
A word will touch, a sound will try;
This golden talismanic word
The wielded rock unconscious stirred;
The guarded brazen gates shall be
Wide rolled to each, who whispers "Lee."

(Aside)—

"When Time unties the knots of Fate
The blood-dipt strand Confederate
Will shew as the horizon's sine,
Each farther space the same straight line."

(Aloud)—

"Three hundred years Virginia grew
To flower in her son!"

Soldiers—

"Ne'er frigid will the South'ner be

As zero—kissing mercury,
Who hears his songs—the name of Lee.”

A Drummer—

“(Ne’er name him but with a stifled cheer in the
voice!”)

Soldiers—

“No blame, shame, ill fame sears that name.
The sound that stirs the Southern soul
Today, will move the Southern hand

In years and deed to be.
The name that fires the Southern heart,
The name that nerves the Southern arm,
The glorious name of Lee!

That name a silver thread will run
Thro’ Southern purpose, victories won,
Will knit each great achievement done.

‘Enthusiasts?’

Ne’er but in level ecstasy
He’ll hold the strain, who sings of Lee,
Nor fall to tamer planes.

The sculptor’s toil progressed so far,
A stroke completes, or a stroke may mar.
His purpos’d character complete,
Not strife hath flawed, nee’r’ll Time defeat.
That stately edifice his life
We would not alter in a line;
Scarce minster’s marble marvel breathes
An influence more divine,
Than that the Christian warrior gives,

Who stainless thro' his conflict lives."

A Sergeant—

"Such if the foe his blade hath broken,
They have made not one blade—but two."

Soldiers—

"The South in cycles yet to be
Its Mecca 'll point—the grave of Lee."

A Lieutenant—

"He who hath lost all, seeks naught,
Gains all, nor strives for aught."

Soldiers—

"We'll build a fairer Arlington,
To stand while flowers blow, rivers run,
Nor troop, nor sloop, nor brazen gun,
Dare bar the gate to Lee!

He yielded to the foe his home,
His recompense, ay, such a sum,
No finite rules compute.

That race that from Caucasus' fount,
Did rise on Asia's storied mount,
To flood the unknown West;

Doth seize broad Europe as her car,
To port his honors from afar;
Atlantis watery bed

Is purpled with her offerings,
Impatient Haste o'erfreighted flings
This thousand leagu'ed sea.

Sixty-Eight

That warrior, who aye self forgot,
His state the sole Achillean spot,
The Bayard of the South.

While we, our love and fealty,
Did ne'er such riches seed the sea,
Such wealth ne'er vein the ore.

Our love a very cloth of gold,
A plain beneath his feet unrolled,
In magic stretched from his threshold
To every hearth, roof-tree.

Ne'er longer conquered, broken, poor;
Tho' frowning Fortune's fled his door,
Our love shall mightily restore,
Make richer than before.

The bard will rise who'll voice his worth,
In measures of the cloud and earth."

A Captain—

"When that name ne'er stirs the Southern heart,
May her sun go down, and her moon depart."

(Not scars but stars on her breast we see.)

Soldiers—

"Not his the meed, when the strife hath died away,
Not his, that will ring down the Years' scarred
ridge,
Who with mightier force did win the fray,
But his whose spent remnant kept the bridge."

All—

“Build him a pile of enduring verse,
A monument stronger than Time,
While eye shall see, and ear repeat,

Shall rear its front sublime.
Nor marbles, nor heroic bronze,
Nor trophied towers hath given,
Nor solemn temples, that do lift
A lesser Heaven to the Heavens,
Such fame eternal and secure
As one blind harper’s epic song
Thro’ seven cities sung, and passed
As heirloom venerated chief,
Entailed estate to infant ears;
Ne’er brave the deed, the tale appears,
As quavering on the hoary lip,
The kindling tongue of ninety years.

For oft the rusted steel of story
The world hath found the key to glory.”

Eighty

The idle blade that frets against the sheath,
Stirs at the glories that he did bequeath.
Eternity's unerring lenses now
Separate Life's white unbroken ray
In seven-fold splendors round his brow."







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